ANNOUNCEMENT OF SSA GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Request for Applications (RFA)--Cooperative Agreements for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Projects (formerly known as the Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) Program.
Closing date for submission of applications: December 15, 2006.
The Social Security Administration (SSA) announces the availability of fiscal year 2007 cooperative agreement funds and request for applications.

Section 1149 of the Social Security Act, as added by section 121 of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (TWWIIA), requires the Commissioner of Social Security (the Commissioner) to establish a community-based work incentives planning and assistance program for the purpose of disseminating accurate information to beneficiaries with disabilities on work incentives programs and issues related to such programs to assist them in their employment efforts. The Commissioner has established a competitive program of cooperative agreements to provide work incentives planning, assistance and outreach. This SSA program is called the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program, formerly referred to as the Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach (BPAO) Program. The WIPA program also provides information on the availability of protection and advocacy services to beneficiaries with disabilities, including beneficiaries participating in the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program established under section 1148, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program established under section 1619, and other programs that are designed to encourage beneficiaries with disabilities to seek, maintain and regain employment.

The WIPA Program is an important part of SSA's employment strategy for beneficiaries with disabilities. One of SSA's goals in implementing TWWIIA is to help achieve a substantial increase in the number of beneficiaries with disabilities who return to work and achieve greater self-sufficiency.

In support of this goal, SSA is seeking applications from any State or local government (excluding any State agency administering the State Medicaid program), public or private organization, or nonprofit or for-profit organization (for-profit organizations may apply with the understanding that no cooperative agreement funds may be paid as profit to any cooperative agreement awardee), as well as Native American Tribal organizations that the Commissioner determines is qualified to provide work incentives planning services for the service areas mentioned in the Federal Register published Request For Applications. Applicants will emphasize the WIPA Program's efforts to provide Social Security beneficiaries receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and/or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) based on disability and/or blindness with work incentives planning, assistance and outreach services to assist them in their return to work efforts. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to partner with their local Department of Labor (DOL) One-Stop Career Center which serves as a "port of entry" for jobs for beneficiaries, as well as with other local partners that provide employment-related services to SSA beneficiaries with disabilities. Currently, DOL One-Stop Career Centers have many invaluable employment-related resources and supports that can help ensure a disabled beneficiary's success in seeking and maintaining employment.

While SSA recognizes not every SSDI or SSI beneficiary with a disability will use work incentives planning and assistance services, awardees must make these services available to all eligible beneficiaries within a WIPA awardee's assigned geographic area.

Available for your review is the **Program Announcement** that appears in the Federal Register (http://www.access.gpo.gov).

After reviewing the program announcement and the application package, if you decide you are interested in submitting an application it is preferred that an electronic application be submitted through www.grants.gov for Funding Opportunity Number SSA-OESP-07-1. The www.grants.gov, "Get Registered" webpage is available to help explain the registration and application submission process. If you experience problems with the steps related to registering to do business with the Federal government or application submission, your first point of contact is the Grants.gov support staff at support@grants.gov , 1-800-518-4726. If your difficulties are not resolved, you may

also contact the SSA Grants Management Team for assistance: Gary Stammer, 410-965-9501; Mary Biddle, 410-965-9501; Ann Dwayer, 410-965-9534; Audrey Adams, 410-965-9469; Phyllis Y. Smith, 410-965-9518.

If extenuating circumstances prevent you from submitting an application through www.grants.gov, please contact the SSA Grants Management Team for possible prior approval to download, complete and submit the Application Package included below. For complete instructions and guidelines regarding submission of applications, refer to the official Program Announcement that appears in the Federal Register. The submitted Project Narrative should contain the information requested in the Program Announcement that appears in the Federal Register.

Also, as may be necessary, you can view or download the most recent State Single Point of Contact List (SPOCs) at the web site http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html .

Downloadable Application Package Documents for SSA-OESP-07-1

1. **Program Announcement**		PDF
2. **Federal Assistance Application Form, SSA-96-BK**	MSWord	PDF
3. **Additional Assurances**	MSWord	PDF
4. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, SF-LLL**	MSWord	PDF
5. **Application Package Instructions**	MSWord	PDF
6. **Application Checklist**	MSWord	PDF
Download Entire Application Kit in Zip File Format	MSWord	PDF

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